

# CHRISTIANITY and CRISIS

*A Christian Journal of Opinion*

## The Steel Strike: Glory of an Open Society?

The long steel strike, which reveals no sign of being resolved in spite of President Eisenhower's intervention, is one more indication that labor-management relations have entered a new phase in our nation. Other indications include the obviously corrupt Teamsters Union and the "rough" new labor law which was designed to restore some semblance of democracy and decency in the corrupt unions.

In the case of the Teamsters and the new labor law, the facts are extreme symbols of the over-all fact that labor has lost, both in the public image and in its image of itself, every vestige of the idea that it is an "idealistic" force working for the redemption of society. It is now recognized as just another "pressure group" among the many pressure groups whose conflicting interests must be resolved in a democratic society. Even the idealistic labor chiefs, Walter Reuther for instance, have much more modest claims for their influence on the moral texture of society. Not very long ago he thought he was about to achieve a "guaranteed annual wage." But under new conditions much more limited goals must be pursued.

To come back to the steel strike, one must compare the temper of the public with the original enthusiasm with which the public supported the right of the steel workers to organize. It must also be compared with the complacency with which both public and management regarded the strikes for higher wages after the war. The charge was indeed made that these were merely "token" strikes and there was a suspicion that the readiness of the companies to grant higher wages, as long as they

could raise steel prices, indicated a kind of secret understanding between the two organized sectors of the community (labor and management) against the unorganized portion of the community (consumers) and that this understanding spelled inflation. The policy of full employment and higher wages did produce at least a "creeping" inflation, at the expense of people with fixed incomes.

The inflationary peril is indeed one of the causes for the new temper of the public. Sumner Schlichter may be right in asserting that a three per cent annual inflation is the price we must pay for a healthy economy of full employment, but the general public supports the President in his effort to "hold the line" against inflation. This support has tremendously enhanced Eisenhower's prestige in the last year of his administration.

It is significant that the public has not been too anxious to find whether prices or wages are responsible for the inflationary spiral. The Administration reluctantly published statistics on steel wages and prices, but both were so high that the public could draw no clear conclusions.

Negotiations have broken down because the companies assert that the wage demands are inflationary and that the workers refuse to make concessions required for more efficiency in production. The union, on the other hand, insists that the companies' demands represent "break-the-union" proposals. No analysis of these conflicting charges has been made to give the public any criteria of judgment.

Thus a complete impasse has been reached in the operation of one of the basic democratic rights

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—the right to bargain collectively—and the Secretary of Labor, Mr. Mitchell, has declared that this impasse places that basic right in great peril. It is difficult to believe, however, that the right to strike, even in a basic industry, would be seriously challenged by either political party.

It is also difficult to see, as some enthusiasts for our democracy have avowed, that the visiting Mr. Khrushchev would be greatly impressed by the steel strike as one of the glories of an "open society." Perhaps we have reached one of the ultimate problems of freedom in a technical age even as the Russians are experiencing the necessity of more freedom in their dynamic society.

At least the dilemma gives a point to the contention of Mr. Edward Crankshaw, the English expert on Russia. His thesis is that despite present polarity between ourselves and the Russians, our ilar if, meanwhile, we do not destroy each other. economic systems are bound to become more similar. For the Russians must pay more attention to incentives for the sake of the efficiency of their technical society, while we must pay more attention to planning and control. History could give us the ironic result. It would certainly be preferable to the tragedy of a nuclear war.

R. N.

## ALTERNATIVES FOR ALGERIA

**F**EW "COLONIAL DISPUTES" have been fraught with more far-reaching consequences than the Algerian question. The anti-colonial powers point to the unresolved issues dividing France and Algeria as evidence of continuing imperialism in the West. France's participation in NATO is severely restricted by the heavy French commitment to the North African battlefield. Any balanced economic growth in France is greatly handicapped by the continuous drain of manpower and resources, and the deep gulf between supporters of liberation and integration has divided and enfeebled French society.

General de Gaulle's formulation in mid-September of the three alternatives for Algeria must be viewed in this context. The background for his announcement that Algerians, four years after pacification, could choose independence, autonomy or integration can be found in the promise of social and economic reform for Algeria. It must also be seen in de Gaulle's patient attempt to weaken the forces at the political extremes both in France and Algeria. Even a strong political leader is limited

by his capacity to override political opposition and his ability to organize a sufficiently broad political base for his action.

Algeria from the outset has been the classic example of the political problem where interests, as defined, appear irreconcilable. The Algerian problem has proven insoluble for postwar French leaders partly because they lacked the power to carry forward a solution and partly because no one was able to redefine the interests of the various parties in terms that made them at least partially compatible.

A reformulation of vital interests requires the statesman to search for a set of common objectives that the various groups will accept. In practice these objectives seldom approach the hopes and dreams of any of the contending parties but they can be more palatable than continuing the *status quo*. Timing is as important as the merits of the proposals. Policies put forth on a take-it-or-leave-it basis can hardly be calculated to win support especially if poorly timed. The more sensitive the nation or groups, the less acceptable a policy based on ultimatums will be.

The three alternatives posed by General de Gaulle may be less important than this recognition of the Algerians' ultimate right of self-determination. By casting the three alternatives in terms of the rights of the Algerians to determine their future, de Gaulle in effect made impossible a rejection of his statement by the leaders of the National Liberation Front (FLN: the so-called Provisional Government formed in 1958).

These leaders were criticized last October when they rejected flatly and promptly de Gaulle's offer of a "peace of the brave." Frenchmen like Raymond Aron, however, questioned the General's approach at the time pointing out that the call for negotiations in Paris with the Algerians laying down their arms in advance was a call for capitulation and not for fair and reasonable talks. Both sides may have learned from the earlier experience for both have been more moderate in their claims. The rebel "government-in-exile" in Tunisia deliberated for several weeks before formulating a reply.

Each of the three alternatives was calculated to appeal, however provisionally, to one or more party in the negotiations. In both French and Algerian politics, the General's statement prompted a sharp response. On both sides of the Mediterranean, the advocates of "integration" joined in a chorus of

support for this alternative. Settlers' organizations and military men in Algeria joined hands with the traditional prophets of integration in France like M. Bidault. A new French political group was formed called the Rally for French Algeria. The response of the Army in Algeria came in the message of General Challe to his troops calling for an intensified struggle against the FLN rebels.

This action reflects the temper of integrationists in Algeria. It sets the limits within which General de Gaulle can move toward a policy of self-determination. The Army will not revolt so long as de Gaulle refuses to enter into direct political negotiations with the FLN. He must find a way to pursue his policy while protecting his flank.

The weeks of silence that preceded the FLN answer to the French leader's most liberal proposal thus far suggests a possible *modus vivendi*. The FLN in responding cautiously with counter-proposals of its own reflects the influence of two forces. On one side there is the force of moderate North African opinion and on the other there is the influence of possible UN action. President Bourguiba and King Mohammed V of Morocco, with whom rebel leaders conferred, undoubtedly opposed a flat rejection of the new plan. Tunisia and Morocco have themselves emerged as new nations on a step-by-step basis, accepting every French concession for purposes of bargaining for other more favorable ends. Meanwhile, General de Gaulle's declaration probably destroyed any chance of a decisive vote in the United Nations condemning France in Algeria. Both Secretary Herter and President Eisenhower expressed sympathy with the French policy.

On September 28, twelve days after de Gaulle's statement, the FLN speaking as "The depository and guarantor of the interests of the Algerian people" accepted the principle of self-determination. It declared a willingness to discuss the political and military conditions of a cease-fire and the conditions and guarantees of self-determination.

Initial French reaction was to disregard the rights of the rebels to speak for Algeria. Yet simultaneously the rumor went out that plans had been revived for the projected meeting between General de Gaulle and King Mohammed V which had been cancelled at the last minute in August. This time the North African leader was said to be ready to come to Paris (the FLN did not dispute the location of the talks as they did previously). If there are further talks, they will undoubtedly involve a third party like the King of Morocco partly to save face on both sides.

The obstacles to peace remain substantial. The French have been unwilling to recognize the FLN even though several Arab states have recognized its *de facto* status. The FLN opposes any form of partition even if four years after peace some sectors of Algeria were to choose independence and others were not. The French have insisted on rights to petroleum resources in the Sahara whereas the nationalist communiqué speaks of them as an object of "broad and fruitful cooperation."

Whether these and other issues between the French and the FLN can be resolved sufficiently to allow for progress in the forthcoming conversations, if they are held, remains to be seen. The importance of General de Gaulle's statement has been to break the impasse in discussion, however numerous the concrete steps that remain to be taken.

K. W. T.

## RESULTS OF THE VISIT

IT IS TOO EARLY to be confident about the results of the visit of Premier Nikita Khrushchev. At a later time we shall present a careful analysis of what has happened. But it does seem, as of now, that the results are better than was expected.

President Eisenhower is apparently convinced that the issue of Berlin is now negotiable with some promise of success. He has communicated real confidence that there is no longer a threat to the people of West Berlin. It looks as though we have shown readiness to yield on some aspects of the larger German problem in exchange for effective guarantees in regard to West Berlin, for we are no longer insisting on the unification of Germany as a condition for anything else.

One of the harsh features of this situation that may constitute a problem for both the Russians and us is that the Government of East Germany is such a miserable Stalinist tyranny. The picture would be different if East Germany had a regime that resembled the Government of Poland.

Apparently there is also some hope of breaking the impasse on disarmament. Adlai Stevenson was successful in securing from Khrushchev some assurance that he did favor controls and inspection during the various stages of disarmament and not only at the end of the four year period, and Khrushchev confirmed this in his final news conference. There is ground for believing Khrushchev is really convinced that disarmament is important to the Soviet Union and to the preservation of peace, and that he is not engaged only in propa-



ganda when he talks about peace. The fact that he believes that communism will win without the use of military force supports his convictions about disarmament and peace, but it should not frighten us if we preserve a considerable measure of health in our own society. No out-producing of the United States can of itself meet all human needs, and while many people may prefer the early stages of economic advance to freedom if they must choose between them, there are many who would be satisfied only by a system that offered both.

There is some evidence that Khrushchev did gain some favorable impressions of America, that he may have less suspicion of the American Government and of the Wall Street clique as counting on war against communism, that he was not only joking when talking about capitalist and communist slaves but was suggesting that the former were as mythical as the latter, that he was sur-

prised to find that the economic motive for the support of armaments was not a determinative factor.

What the American people made of Khrushchev is not very clear. They were not very well prepared for him. Not many of them knew how much he has tried to free Russia from the Stalinist terror, and most of them were sure that a Communist was by definition untrustworthy. But he did fascinate them and impress them as being more human than they expected. The fact that he received a much warmer reception during the second week must have been in part a result of the cumulative impression that he had made up to that time.

All of us are aware of the danger of being taken in by the Communists, but some of us are now willing to admit that it is possible to be mistaken either way on this matter and that, at this stage, the more dangerous error may be to act as though no new possibilities exist.

J. C. B.

## A Good Word for Some Southern Ways

ROGER L. SHINN

SOME OF my best friends are segregationists. I wish they were not, but we remain friends. After all, I have my regrettable prejudices too. Sometimes they overlap my friends' prejudices, sometimes not. If friendship were possible only between unprejudiced people, I would have no friends, and no one would find me worthy to be a friend.

But I had better clarify my language. The friends I have mentioned will sometimes say that some of *their* best friends are Negroes, *but . . .* So, when I say some of my friends are segregationists, I must immediately add that I enjoy having lunch with them. (It is only fair to add that everyone seems happier if they are not there when I have Negro guests.) I readily let my children attend the public schools with their children.

One problem puzzles me more. Do I want my daughter to marry a segregationist? Curiously no one has ever challenged me with that question—though it is a sensible one and is harder to answer than some questions that get thrown around more frequently. The question is difficult because I seriously doubt the wisdom of intermarriage between segregationists and integrationists. However, I oppose legislation forbidding such intermarriages. And I do not expect to issue any parental edicts

on the subject. My commands have little enough effect on my daughters. Even so, I respect my daughters enough to assume that they will use good judgment in responding to marriage proposals or in seeking the same.

When I argue with these segregationists, I try to change their opinions. They try to change mine. Rarely does anyone succeed. But some of them have convinced me of a certain point of merit in their case. They prompt me to say a good word for some of the ways of the South. After saying it, I shall not conclude that we should delay integration, but I shall point to the unique opportunity of the churches in this time of social crisis.

I doubt that this attempt will be very effective. My liberal friends, whom I have joined in many a battle, may dislike my capitulation to even a part of the logic of the South. The segregationists may resent my use of their logic, and they will properly deny me any right to speak for the South. But even with these doubtful prospects, I must say something.

Let us start with a fairly obvious fact. The forces producing social change in the South are primarily economic. We might wish that religious faith and conscience were doing more, but industrialization, urbanization and commercial progress are the processes that everyone must reckon with. There is nothing sordid about these economic

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forces; they are part of God's creation and, like religion, may serve or defy him. We can be thankful that while the economy once made slavery profitable, now it makes segregation costly to everyone.

### **Social Change and Human Relations**

The evidences are clear on all sides. Rising Negro purchasing power undermines old patterns of racial etiquette; many an automobile salesman has welcomed a Negro customer and called him "Mister," in complete opposition to all his home training. The automobile is an equalizer in other ways; traffic regulations and signal lights simply cannot be adjusted to give whites all the advantages. Employers needing skilled labor must sometimes lose able employees and profits if the personnel office hangs out the sign, "Whites only." The subjection of a large part of the population to low educational opportunities, slum housing, and disease proves costly to any city. Factories seeking sites look for cities with good public schools and with minimal racial strife. In times when the productivity of the nation must meet vast international challenges, costly old institutions of prejudice must give way.

The city of Little Rock offers a parable for the whole South. The churches, after some futile efforts to stop the flamboyant Faubus, lapsed into ineffectiveness. When the Governor closed the schools some churches cooperated by offering their resources for private, segregated, white education. Although some persistent and courageous pastors kept up their efforts, it was business far more than the churches that got the high schools reopened this fall. We can hope that some of the effective business men were influenced by their Christian faith; we can be sure that they were influenced by economics.

The extensive plans to attract new industry to Little Rock were a colossal flop during the entire period of strife. The jibe went around that the only business showing gains was the moving business, which had plenty to do getting people out of town. When the Chamber of Commerce wanted the schools opened, the effect was something that the Ministers' Association could not produce. Granted all the legal and moral pressures at work, the economic ones were most prominent.

A Christian can only be grateful that economic processes are opening doors for people who have been oppressed. But he must point out the limitations of economic change. When it brings new op-

portunities to people, it does not necessarily bring personal acceptance. The same limitations apply to the law, which can get Negroes inside the school building but not necessarily inside the community of students.

Where even moderate good will is at work, desegregation brings people new experiences of other races and thereby destroys old stereotypes and leads to friendship. Without the good will, desegregation may actually heighten hostility.

What happens in Southern industrialization is often that the Negro comes to be accepted as customer, as employee, as taxpayer, as voter, but not *as person*. These acceptances, though helpful, are not enough.

When Negroes broke into major league baseball, the press often asked their Southern teammates for quotable reactions. The typical statement was, "If he helps us win ball games, I'm for him." That was a fine sporting statement—for a start. It brushed aside all kinds of irrelevant prejudices within the limited democracy of the athletic elite. But, of itself, it implied no full personal acceptance. The Negro skills, not the Negro persons, were wanted. Some of the pioneer Negro athletes discovered painfully that they were accepted as players, not as people. Baseball did not stop at that point. The rapport of an effective functioning team meant that Negro players came, rather soon, to be teammates in the fuller meaning of that term.

But the success story is not uniform. A factory has a different morale than a ball team's. The white laborer, who has the strange experience of working *beside* a Negro or the stranger experience of working *under* a Negro boss, may gain new appreciation of this man of another race. Or he may work with hostilities that seethe more violently than ever before. Or he may manage this baffling situation by acknowledging the Negro as co-worker and even as boss without extending any personal recognition.

The South remains the region of the country that cultivates personal relations above all others. Its graciousness and human concern are not just the hokum of Southern oratory, though they are often that. Men who treasure this valid element in the Southern heritage are disturbed at tendencies to meet other people as abstract functions rather than as persons. So slight a thing as a trip downtown on the bus may have in the South a ritual quality quite unintelligible to the Northern subway rider. The prejudiced New Yorker, who daily jostles Negroes and Puerto Ricans on the sub-

way, does not thereby acknowledge any status for them. But the prejudiced Southerner, who shares a seat on the bus with a Negro (as he did not five years ago) thereby reluctantly grants a status to the person. This is one of many reasons why desegregation is difficult in the South.

Many Southerners see clearly or sense dimly that industrialization characteristically—I do not say necessarily—throws people together, increasing but depersonalizing their relations. The changing legal situation may do the same. Racial equality, even without personal appreciation, is unquestionably a gain; it frees people from discomfort and humiliation. But it may be no gain at all in human understanding. Thus Kyle Haselden, in the best book I know on the subject, warns:

"While the physical equivalents of Negroes and whites are increasing, the spiritual equivalents are deteriorating and . . . this may prove to be the real racial danger and problem of our time." (*The Racial Problem in Christian Perspective*, Harpers, 1959, p. 135.)

### Making the Most of Change

Some segregationists love the South because so much in the South is lovable. These men, though they share the perversity of all of us and need redemption as we all do, are not spiteful and malevolent. The tragedy of contemporary history means that they unwittingly contribute to a public temper that makes it easy for spiteful and malevolent men to do vicious deeds. They aim to be humane, and we must recognize that desegregation is harder for them than for those who can take it casually on an impersonal and trivial basis.

Some of these men resist the economic changes which in their judgment bring greater prosperity and equality but a decline in gracious personal intercourse. In their affection for real values in the Southern tradition, they may cling to traditional evils. The fact that the same economic changes that erode segregation also endanger better elements in the tradition makes it easy to oppose the new movements for "abstract, impersonal equality," to use a common phrase.

But everybody knows that a return to the Old South is a completely implausible program. The fact is that the South *must* industrialize. Many a Southern politician finds himself in the inconsistent position of winning elections by appeal to race prejudice, then keeping his job by luring industries that are destined to undermine the very habits and institutions that gave him office. Maybe

he sees this contradiction and cynically uses it to fool the voters; maybe he ignorantly stumbles along in his dilemma. In either case the results are about the same.

The difficult opportunity before the South is that of maintaining something of its rich tradition while accepting a better morality of race relations and the economic changes that it needs and wants. A few wise men, with deep roots in the South, have made this point clearly. Perhaps the most eloquent of them is James McBride Dabbs, South Carolina plantation owner, Presbyterian churchman, President of the Southern Regional Council and author of *The Southern Heritage*. Addressing the Tennessee Council on Human Relations a few months ago, Mr. Dabbs criticized both the morality and the practicality of segregation, concluding: "We do not live by it; we live in spite of it." Then he identified the real values in the Southern tradition:

"These are our sense of people, of the value of personal relationships, of the importance of time just for living, not merely for getting ahead; a healthy skepticism of material success; and a realization of the strangeness, even the tragedy, of life."

These values the perceptive Southerner seeks to preserve, as his society moves away from the world in which they developed.

### A Role for the Church

In rejecting the stand of the segregationists, I have accepted part of the case that some of them make. The social changes of our time threaten not only the false values of white supremacy but also some real values of reverence and human understanding. As industrialization writes the "epitaph for Dixie," some mature Southerners pray that not all the traditions of Dixie will be buried.

The solution is not to slow down the economic and ethical revolution. As the NAACP points out, we are nearing the centennial of emancipation, and gradualism cannot be stretched out much more than that. History won't let us tarry. Democracy won't let us. Christianity won't let us.

Instead of advising delay, I would point to the unique opportunity of the churches in this situation. Among the many voices heralding a new era in race relations, the Christian voices do so most specifically out of an understanding of human personality and an ethic of love. A church cannot accept the Negro as the baseball team does, saying: "If he helps us get the new building, we want him." Because the Church accepts persons, not ab-



stract functions, churchmen with an inheritance of personal prejudice find it harder to welcome the Negro into the Church than into factory or professional sport. But the Church, because its unity is in Christ and not in personal preference, is in the midst of great pain discovering a mission today.

In the Little Rock crisis, when a few ministers preached forthrightly in support of school integration, segregationists hurled a telling challenge: "Why do you want to integrate the schools when your churches are segregated?" The embarrassment increased when a few Negroes turned up for Sunday worship at one of the white churches, only to be turned away by the ushers in spite of the pastor's pro-integration sermons. The Negroes said that they came in answer to a telephone invitation from the pastor's wife. This episode was generally regarded as a cunning trick of unscrupulous segregationists. But they could never have carried it off if the white churches had not been morally vulnerable.

Increasingly it appears that the key to a real integration, which includes both legal-political-economic equality and genuine personal appreciation, is in the community of Christian faith. It is possible that churches less concerned for Southern folkways might more effectively preserve what is good in those ways. For there is much that is good in Southern ways.

## PASSING PARADE

### RUSSIA REVISITED

*The following is reprinted from the Autumn 1959 issue of Frontier, organ of the World Dominion Press and the Christian Frontier Council in Great Britain. It was written by the Editor, John Lawrence, who lived for some time in Russia.*

What are the Russians thinking? This summer I have visited Russia once more and I have helped to translate at the conversations with a Russian peace delegation recently in Britain. I have not seen any of the people who make policy but I have seen some of those who are on the "outer circle," that is to say people who meet the policy makers from time to time and help to form the atmosphere of official opinion.

I get a strong impression of the present mood of educated Russians, which is very different from what it was three or four years ago. They are now busy counting their blessings, which are impressive to Soviet citizens and old Moscow hands but not necessarily to anyone else. Food is now plentiful,

good and cheap, though vegetables are short; one can at last say confidently that the poor live better than they did before the Revolution. Housing is now going up at a fantastic rate; earlier claims of progress in Soviet housing were chiefly ballyhoo; the current rate of building is catching up with the gigantic need. The new flats are small and the architecture is dull, but the ghastly cellars in which many lived are now emptying. The return of millions from concentration camps has not overtaxed the new housing. The shops are full, often with absurd luxuries that no one can buy, but also for the first time since the Revolution with things that everyone wants at prices that most people can pay. On public occasions or in the presence of witnesses Soviet citizens still give misleading answers with that dead-pan seriousness that may conceal anything or nothing, but people no longer live in daily fear of arrest. They talk fairly freely with foreigners, and more freely with each other, though there are some subjects that it is better to avoid. The Moscow telephone works as well as ours. Moscow taxis exist and are cheap. And so on and so on.

Russians love their country dearly, indeed they are in danger of making it an idol. They are proud of Russia but they know her weaknesses and they have a timid fear of what others think of her. This can make them both assertive and resentful. When so much is so much better, why must we always remind them of what is still wrong? I do not seek to justify this attitude but to understand it.

Russians are now ready to discuss the tension between East and West with a new openness. Their injured innocence can still be irritating, but are we the people to throw the first stone? Some of their public statements remind me of a Dickensian Englishman explaining the inherent superiority of Victorian England.

Some Soviet propaganda is—or at least has been—consciously untruthful, but some of it is firmly believed. When Russians speak of their country's peaceful intentions they mean what they say. Most of them have a shrewd idea of what happened in Hungary and are uneasy about it, but it does not occur to them that anyone might think this shows a generally aggressive aim, any more than we should think that the Suez campaign shows that Britain and France are aggressive countries.

When Russians speak of peace I sometimes feel they are making a desperate, despairing effort to break through what seems to be our incomprehension and to make us see that they only want to be left in peace. After one such effort, a leading woman journalist said to me, "Now I see how terrible it must be to have to prove that you are innocent, when you *are* innocent." I told her I agreed with Mr. George Kennan that the Soviet Union had never wanted to attack the West. She was pleased with this, but she could not make Mr. Kennan out. "Why then was he the inventor of the policy of containment and one of the architects of NATO?" I said we regarded these as purely defensive arrangements. She found this strange and

spoke about "the organizers of the cold war," without realizing how unreal such a phrase sounded to me.

The peace delegation listened with close attention to an explanation of the underlying reasons for British apprehensions of Russia. This was new to them but it seemed to go home. Afterwards one of them asked how far our attitude was really due to fear and how far to hate.

The Russian picture of our society is much behind the times. They still think of a ruling class of top-hatted capitalists consumed with rage against the workers' state, but reality is beginning to break through. I was interested to find that the phrase "the transformation (*pererozhdenie*) of capitalism" is already well known even if the fact is not yet accepted. I am not implying that capitalism in its latest form is a model institution but I do say that it is very different from the capitalism that Marx and Lenin knew.

I was questioned about where I conceived such a transformation to be taking place. It seemed more credible to them that this should be happening in Britain than in most of the rest of the capitalist world. The dynamic capitalism of America and Western Germany terrifies the average thinking Russian, whether he is a Marxist, a Christian, or an agnostic as regards both these views of the world.

Such exchanges show how far apart we are, but they also show the possibility of genuine meeting. On both sides there are dangerous illusions, but I know both countries and I think that the Soviet illusions about us are more dangerous and more widespread than our illusions about them.

However there has been a new start in cultural relations between this country and the Soviet Union. If this brings enough visitors from each country to the other for long enough these illusions will gradually disappear. We shall not always like each other, and Russian reactions to our reality, when they know it, may be disconcerting; but neither side will find anything to prevent it sharing the same planet with the other.

*We hope in a future issue to continue with Mr. Lawrence's observations on the spiritual situation in Russia.*

THE EDITORS

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## CHURCH NEWS AND NOTES

### Family Planning: Christian Responsibility

*Geneva*—Strong support for family planning as part of the answer to the worldwide "population explosion" is given in a long awaited report of a special Christian study group, published in the *Ecumenical Review* (October 7), the quarterly journal of the World Council of Churches.

Accepting the thesis that the limitation or spacing of children is normally valid, the group held that "there appears to be no moral distinction between the means now known or practiced, by the use whether of estimated periods of infertility or artificial barriers to the meeting of the sperm and ovum—or indeed of drugs which would, if made effective and safe, inhibit or control ovulation in a calculable way.

Noting that the current population explosion which means an annual increase of 50 million persons causes grave "social, political, economic and even religious repercussions," the study group states that "its shock waves buffet countless human families."

Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox churchmen were participants in the group. The Orthodox member indicated that the historic and doctrinal position of that church requires a different approach at certain points. The most notable difference was on the question of family planning. According to the Orthodox teaching the only means of family planning allowable is by means of marital abstinence.

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